

TO CORRESPONDENTS.
All communications for this paper should be accompanied by the name of the author, not necessarily for publication, but as evidence of good faith on the part of the writer. Write only on one side of the paper. Be particularly careful in giving names and dates, to have all letters or figures plain and distinct.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Personal and Literary.

—Senator Sargent of California has received from the Grand Master of Masons the appointment of orator for the ensuing year.

—William C. Bryant, Whitelaw Reid and Geo. W. Curtis will be the judges at the intercollegiate oratorical contest in New York, January 4.

—The humorous sketches of Southern backwoods character, published in the *Vicksburg Herald*, are the productions of James H. Sullivan, a young journalist of Memphis.

—Governor Walker of Virginia is pronounced by a susceptible Washington lady correspondent the handsomest of all the M. C.'s. "A tall, elegant figure, dark, brilliant eyes, and silvery white hair" is the strain of this writer, who adds: "When one does see a really handsome man the gush gushes itself."

—Whittier sent this response, recently, to a request for his autograph: "Our lives are albums, written through With good or ill, with false or true; And as the blessed angels turn The pages of our years, God grant they read the good with smiles, And blot the ill with tears."

—Michel C. Kerr, the new Speaker of the House, is a tall, stately man, more than 6 feet in height, broad-shouldered, with a head well poised, a full growth of brown hair, and eyes that seem to read you at a glance. His scholarship is of the highest order; books are his dearest companions, and his judgment of men is keen and discriminating. The man is wholly practical. There is no element of humor or romance about him, and his manners are dignified almost to austerity. He is 47 years old.

School and Church.

—Rev. Dr. Eccleston, of Philadelphia, has declined the Bishopric of Iowa, to which he was elected.

—The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, at Boston, one of the largest Catholic churches in this country, was dedicated on 8th with the usual imposing ceremonies.

—Among the most notable of recent events in the South was the dedication of the chapel of the Central Tennessee College, in Nashville. This institution, with the Fisk University, in the same city, is devoted to the education of colored persons of both sexes, and has grown with great rapidity.

—The Board of Methodist Bishops has adopted resolutions stating that all the authorities of the church which could be consulted having agreed to the removal of the seat of the General Conference from St. Louis to Baltimore; the General Conference is called to assemble in Baltimore next May.

—Cardinal McCloskey secured aid while in Rome toward the building of the Cathedral in Fifth Avenue, New York. He says that the structure will be completed before the end of 1877. He gave the order in Italy for an altar to be placed in the Cathedral at a cost of \$250,000. It will be made of the finest Italian marble, spacious, and of the Gothic style of architecture, and plentifully decorated with jewels and mosaics. The work is already under way, and will be imported before many months.

—The basis of union agreed upon between the Commissioners of the Methodist Protestant and the Methodist Churches, provided that the united church shall be called "the Methodist Protestant Church;" that the limit of pastoral service at each charge shall be five successive years, and that the ratio of representation in the General Conference shall be one minister and one layman for every 1,000 members. The General Conference is at no time to exceed 100 members.

Science and Industry.

—Steam is reckoned to be 90 times cheaper than manual power, 70 times cheaper than electro-motive power, and 10 times cheaper than horse power.

—Blankets of brown paper, of superior quality, perforated in such a manner as to permit a free passage for the exhalations of the body without diminishing the warmth, are advertised in London.

—American tanners are now sending the best oak sole-leather to all parts of Europe, and selling it at a profit, with orders ahead, indicating that the trade has been most satisfactory.

—Leaves of the pineapple, now being extensively cultivated in the East Indies, are turned to account by being converted into a kind of wadding which is used for upholstering instead of hair. A sort of flannel is also manufactured from them, from which substantial waistcoats and shirts can be made.

—The Desert Silk Association held a meeting at Salt City, a few days since, and authorized the purchase of a loom and employment of a weaver, with a view of testing the industry practically. The experiment of silk working on a small scale has already been satisfactorily made in several parts of the Territory.

—Experiments with the electric light as a headlight for locomotives have recently been made in Russia on the railroad from Moscow to Kursk, with successful results. The apparatus consisted in a battery of 48 couples, which produced sufficient illumination to light up the track for a distance of from 1,500 to 1,800 feet ahead. It has been suggested that a small electric machine would serve the purpose much better than a galvanic battery, liable to injury by agitation. It is proposed to connect the mechanism directly with the front axle, the revolution of which will set the former in operation.

Foreign Notes.

—The Emperor William on the birthday of Von Moltke presented the veteran General with the family Order of the Hohenzollerns, with a star and crossed swords.

—Emperor William has sanctioned the scheme presented to him for a great synod of the established Protestant Churches in Prussia, which is to convene in a few weeks for the first time.

—The Khedive of Egypt was educated in Paris, speaks French to perfection, is a capital talker on any kind of subject, and takes an especially keen interest in England and any thing English.

—The Prince of Wales shook the Khedive warmly by the hand when he was received by that personage at Cairo. They are old friends, the Prince having enjoyed the Oriental hospitality of Egypt no less than three times.

—Japan has finally ceded the Island of Saghalien to Russia in exchange for the Kurile Islands. The Russians will first establish a penal colony on that island. The Ainu, who live there at present, will emigrate to Yeddo.

—Whiffs from *Ararat*, a lively little sheet, published by the American Board missionaries at Ezroom, Turkey in Asia, refers to the difficulties under which the one weekly newspaper of that city labors. The editor ventured to suggest that the beating of drums and firing of guns was not the best way of frightening off an eclipse of the sun or moon. The Turkish censor of the press, however, decided that this time-honored and sacred custom dare not be inveighed against, and suppressed the article.

—A married woman named Boyon has been condemned to death at the Lot Assizes, France, for murdering her seven children and granddaughter by pushing needles into their bodies. She had ten children, seven of whom died under twelve months old, but it was not until the death of her granddaughter that an investigation was made. Her apparent motive for this last crime was that the child might die before its father, who was in a desperate condition, and that she might thus secure part of his property, to the prejudice of her daughter-in-law, whom she detested. When asked how she came to think of sticking needles in her children's bodies, she said that at the public house she kept there was one day a conversation on infanticide, and it was said babies did not suffer when murdered in this way.

Haps and Mishaps.

—A boy named Allie Jones, 15 years of age, was accidentally shot and killed at Cincinnati by Robert Jackman, aged 16. The boys were firing at a mark when the accident occurred.

—Wesley Cornell, aged 13, while trying to close the window shutters in the second story of a school house at Logansport, Ind., fell out of the window and was fatally injured, having his skull fractured.

—The boiler of a portable engine belonging to William Nelson, New Harmony, Ind., exploded, instantly killing Thomas Nelson, engineer, Solomon Enlow, a sawyer, and badly scalding several other workmen.

—Frank Shaffer, 23 years old, while out hunting, near Seymour, Ind., was accidentally shot by a man named Boyce, who was also hunting. Boyce discovered some object moving in the brush near by, which proved to be Shaffer. Thinking it was a turkey, Boyce fired, the charge taking effect in Shaffer's breast, killing him instantly.

—Samuel Shibles, an orphan 14 years of age, grandson of Capt. Simeon S. Shibles, committed suicide at Thomaston, Maine, by shooting himself with a revolver. It is supposed he committed the deed through remorse for a theft from his uncle, it being a portion of the proceeds with which the revolver (a new one) was purchased. He informed some boys with whom he was playing, that he should breathe his last that night.—Christian Wallenmeyer, a wealthy German farmer living near Evansville, Ind., went into an orchard with a shot-gun and butcher-knife, stood against an apple tree and discharged the gun in his mouth, and afterwards cut his throat from ear to ear.—Robert W. Drexler, a well known merchant of Boston, shot himself at his country residence, at Newton, Upper Falls, dying instantly.—Charles Hensinger committed suicide by shooting himself through the head, at Grand Island, Neb.—Gustavus Dader, a German saloon keeper of Adrian, Mich., committed suicide by taking strychnine. He was 27 years old.—Seth Clark, an old resident and prominent business man of Buffalo, was found lying on the ground in his lumber-yard, shot through the head. A pistol beside him and the circumstances lead to the probability of suicide.

Odds and Ends.

—Since Brigham Young's release from confinement he acts like a changed man. It is only necessary for any of his wives to hint that the fire is low, and he will trot out to the woodshed without a murmur.—*Brooklyn Argus*.

—A goose that sees another drink will do the same, though he is not thirsty. The custom of drinking for company, when drinking is dispensable and prejudicial, seems to be a case of the same

kind, and to put a man, feathers only excepted, upon a footing with a goose.

—On one block in the western part of Detroit there are eight ladies who won't go to church on Sundays because a ninth lady has an India shawl and they haven't. And the lady who has it won't go for there is no chance for her to show off the shawl before the eight, whose feelings she well understands.—*Free Press*.

I WANT TO BE AN ANGEL (AS SINGING BY THE GIRL OF THE PERIOD).

I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
With my "pull-back" tight around me
And my peedie in my hand.
With my bright-lined striped stockings
And my lemon-colored gloves,
I'd be the gayest angel
In the celestial groves.

—The following "Ode to the Prairie Wind!" appears in the *Burlington Hawkeye* as original, but it reads amazingly like Joaquin Miller: "Oh, the blizzard, the beautiful blizzard; freezing a fellow from ear-to-toe; making his face as blue as a wizard; chilling the life-blood that flows from his gizzard; blowing, snowing, cold as a lizard; get up and get out of this, beautiful blizzard."

The Early Life of a Famous Poet.

Joaquin Miller has revealed some incidents in his ante-famous life to a correspondent of the *Louisville Courier Journal*. The poet does not know where he was born, but believes it was in Cincinnati, in 1841. His father was impecunious and wandering, and in a fit condition to take the gold fever in 1849. The family went together to California, and thence to Oregon, where the father was killed by Modocs, who at the same time took Joaquin prisoner. "They really loved me, and somehow I loved the red devils in return. Well, I was with them nearly five years, I reckon, and learned their language better than I know the English to day. Then came the Modoc war—the first one—there wasn't any speech-making about that war. It was scalp and an incessant hell! I could have left them, if I had liked; but they were grand rascals, and I fought with them! They were going to make me a chief or something. They were whipped in '58, I think, and I would have been hung, if caught." He escaped in a canoe, reached San Francisco, and soon afterward joined Walker's expedition to Nicaragua. After that exploit he studied law in Oregon and was admitted to practice. In 1861 he went gold hunting in Idaho. "I named the territory," he says; "it is an Indian word—from the language of the North Shoshones—and it means the 'Gem of the Mountains.' When the Government ordered the organization of the Territory in '62, the name clung to it, 'Idaho' it was, is, and will stand." He made \$10,000, and lost it in a newspaper enterprise, was elected District Judge, and got married. After this last occurrence, he "didn't have a pleasant moment for years."

Christmas in Germany.

None know better how to make "presents" or to invent souvenirs. For a German not to know the birth days and wedding anniversaries of all his intimate friends, and not to commemorate them by some token of affection, however slight (for the value is nothing compared to the sentiment), is a barbarism, a sacrilege. In large families these commemorations, reaching from the grandparent to the yearling babe, and extending out to all dear friends, keep up, of course, an almost continuous exercise of kindly attentions and forethought, and the Germans have quite universally a peculiar tact of clothing these beautiful little things with dramatic surprise, so as to render the "manner" infinitely more precious than the "matter." The lowliest village schoolmaster's birthday is known to all his rustic flock, and his cottage on that day is a shrine of pilgrimage to all the little feet of the hamlet. Flowers, books, cheeses, loaves of bread, embroidered slippers, chickens, geese, even young pigs, are showered upon him. He is decked with bouquets, and his humble home garlanded within and without; he is addressed in original doggerel, and serenaded with music and dancing. And thus, also, fares the village pastor; and all these things are done so heartily, so joyously, as to be evidently spontaneous, never ceremonious—as much a joy to the donors as to the recipients. Add to these domestic occasions the public festive days of the Church and the State, and you can imagine that German life has holidays enough. Christmas and similar days are occasions of incredible festivities throughout Germany. Santa Claus has no better dominion.

He Couldn't Understand Such Extravagance.

"Can I take one o' yer yer splinters?" inquired a frontiersman, pointing to the box of wooden toothpicks in a South Side restaurant, the other day.

"Certainly, sir," replied the polite cashier.

The man took one, and backing off a few steps—using it the while industriously—soon returned, and carefully depositing it from whence it came remarked to the amazed cashier, complacently:

"I don't see how yer can 'ford ter keep them things. I notice so many folks take 'em off an' never bring 'em back!"

JANUARY.						
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AUGUST.						
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SEPTEMBER.						
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OCTOBER.						
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NOVEMBER.						
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DECEMBER.						
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ASTRONOMICAL—1876.

[From the Chicago Tribune.]

The following are the principal astronomical phenomena of the year 1876. The times given are Chicago mean time, and the appearance is that presented to an observer in this city, unless otherwise stated:

SUNDAYS IN 1876.
Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30. July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30.
Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27. Aug. 6, 13, 20, 27.
March 6, 13, 20, 27. Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27.
April 6, 13, 20, 27. Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27.
May 6, 13, 20, 27. Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27.
June 6, 13, 20, 27. Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27.

The year will contain 265 days, of which 53 will be Sundays. April 9 (marked with an *) will be Easter Sunday, being the first Sunday following the passage of the sun through the vernal equinox.

THE MOON.
Month. Full Moon. New Moon.
Jan. 11 0 32 a.m. 26 7 34 a.m.
Feb. 9 11 36 a.m. 25 0 30 a.m.
March 9 0 22 a.m. 25 2 21 a.m.
April 8 1 48 p.m. 24 1 13 a.m.
May 8 2 53 a.m. 23 9 23 a.m.
June 6 6 47 p.m. 24 4 35 p.m.
July 6 9 47 a.m. 20 11 25 p.m.
August 5 0 47 a.m. 19 6 35 p.m.
September 3 3 22 p.m. 17 4 43 p.m.
October 3 5 33 a.m. 15 1 41 a.m.
November 1 5 40 p.m. 15 6 57 p.m.
December 1 5 13 a.m. 15 0 23 p.m.
December 30 4 84 p.m.

THE SEASONS.
Earth in Perihelion.....Jan. 2.....0h. 50 p.m.
Vernal Equinox.....March 20, 0h. 20 a.m.
Summer Solstice.....June 20, 1h. 31 a.m.
Earth in Aphelion.....July 1, 1h. 31 a.m.
Autumnal Equinox.....Sept. 22, 10h. 51 a.m.
Winter Solstice.....Dec. 21, 5h. 1 a.m.
Earth in Perihelion.....Dec. 31, 0h. 10 p.m.

ECLIPSES.
There will be four eclipses in 1876—two of each luminary.

1. A partial eclipse of the moon in the night following March 9; visible from every part of the United States and Canada, if weather permit. The following are the times of the phases as seen from Chicago:

Moon enters Penumbra.....10h. 3m. p.m.
Moon enters shadow.....10h. 31m. p.m.
Opposition in right ascension.....11h. 4m. p.m.
Middle of eclipse.....10h. 31m. p.m.
Moon leaves shadow.....11h. 31m. a.m.
Moon leaves Penumbra.....2h. 55m. a.m.

At the middle of the eclipse, 0.3 of the moon's diameter will be in the shadow.

2. An annular eclipse of the sun, March 25. The annular phase will be visible on this continent only at places very near a line from Vancouver's Island to the northwest shore of Hudson's Bay. It will be visible, as a partial eclipse, from all parts of the United States and Canada outside that limit, except in Florida. The phase will be greatest in Chicago a few minutes before 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

3. A partial eclipse of the moon at 3:30 p.m. of Sept. 3, not visible